



DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling

**For Your Information...**

## How To Prepare Your Recyclables

Every day you probably toss something into the garbage that could have been reused or recycled. Before you toss it, remember the three R's: **reduce**, **reuse** and **recycle**. Can you find another use for what you are throwing away? If not, can it be recycled?

Of course, what can be recycled depends on available services and the local market conditions. Check with your local solid waste department or call DHEC's Recycling Hot Line at **1-800-768-7348** to find out what is going on in your community.

Find out what can be recycled. If you don't have curbside pick-up for your recyclables, organize a place to store items. Use paper bags or cardboard boxes to store materials.

Now you're ready to recycle. Follow the rules below:

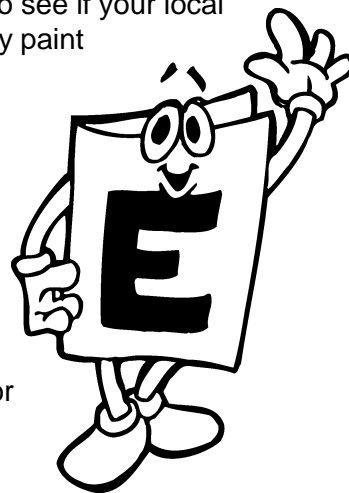
1. **Separate your materials at home if curbside service is not available in your area.** Once at the recycling center, don't mix different kinds of plastic or plastic with glass or clear glass with brown. If you mix items, everything in that bin may be taken to a landfill instead of being recycled.
2. **Clean your items.** Take a moment to rinse bottles and cans. Do this for both curbside and drop-off situations. That will help reduce smell and keep bugs away when you're storing the items for recycling.
3. If possible, **flatten materials.**

Here are a few suggestions for the most commonly accepted items.

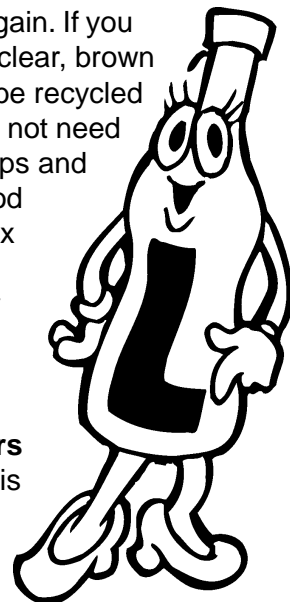
- **Aluminum:** This generally means beverage cans. Rinse and flatten. Check to see if foil and pie plates also are accepted.

- **Steel (or Tin) Cans:** The popular tin can is actually a steel can. This generally means food and soup cans. Rinse and flatten. Lids are accepted, too. Check to see if your local program will take empty paint cans.

- **Newspaper:** It's easily recyclable. Generally, anything that comes with your newspaper, including the glossy inserts, can be recycled as well. Remove plastic bags or rubber bands from newspaper before recycling.

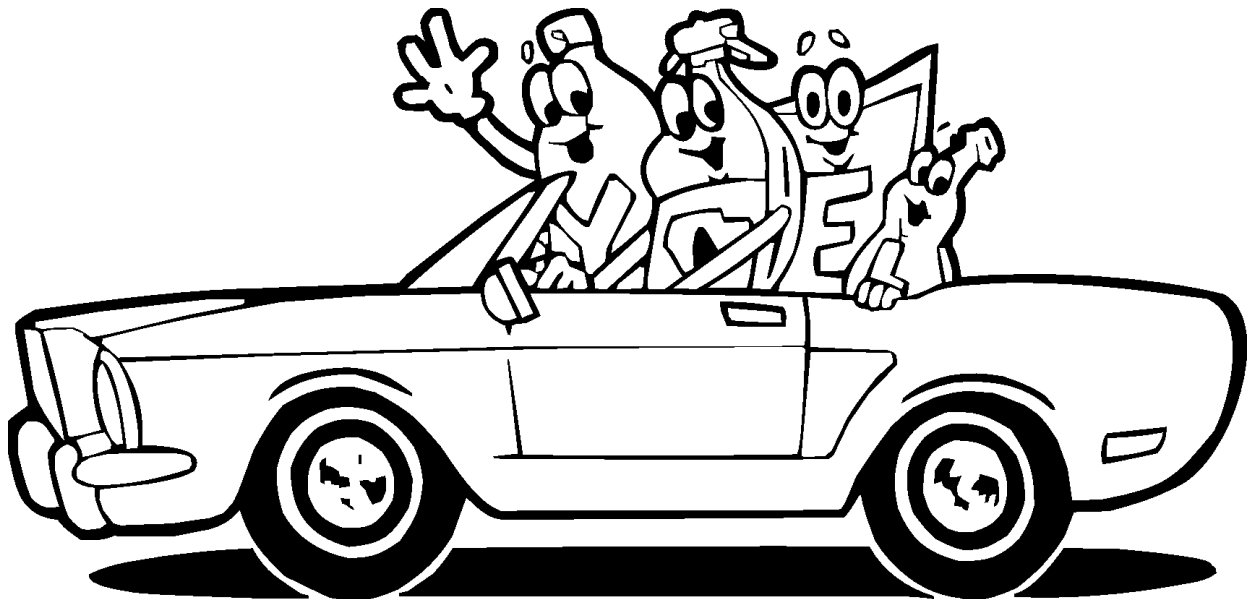
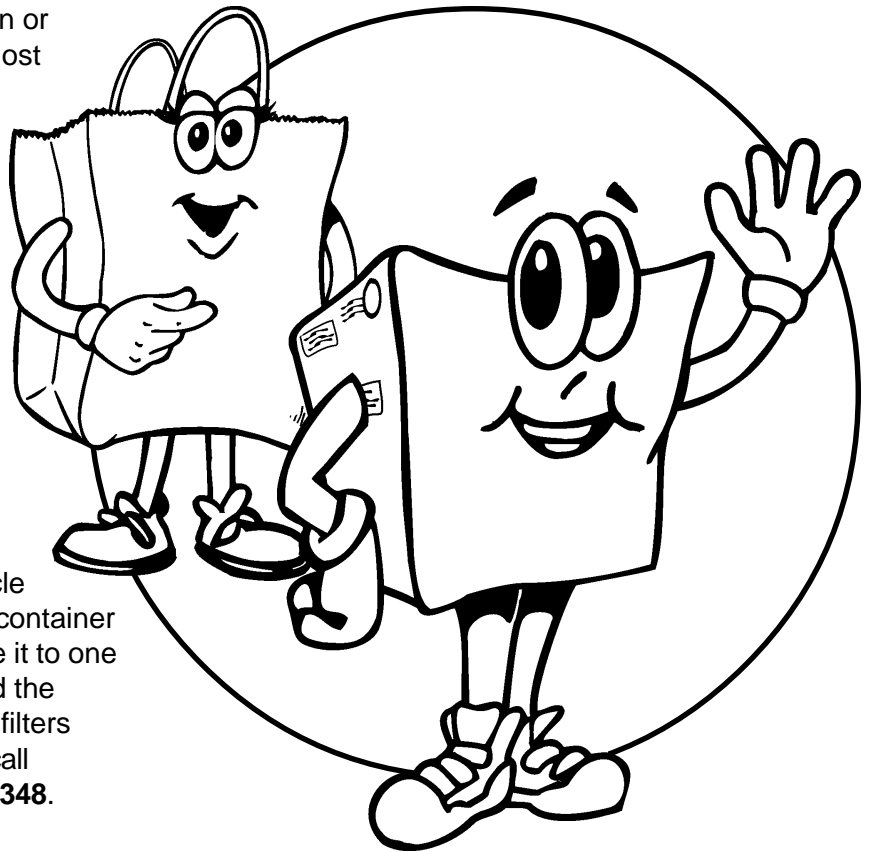


- **Glass:** Use the container again. If you recycle, separate by color: clear, brown and green. Blue glass can be recycled with green glass. Labels do not need to be removed. Remove caps and rinse. Please remove all food matter. Do not recycle Pyrex glass, ceramics, plates, drinking glasses, laboratory glass, window panes, light bulbs and fuses.
- **Plastic Bottles, Containers and Milk Jugs:** The reality is there are many types of plastics, but most programs only accept those marked with a #1 or #2 on the bottom. Remove caps and lids, rinse and flatten. Paper labels do not have to be removed. And it's OK to mix different colored soft drink bottles.



***'R - E - C - Y - C - L - E, it begins with you and me!'***

- **Paper and Plastic Bags:** Use them again or take them back to where you got them. Most grocery stores accept plastic bags back for recycling. Even better, bring your own canvas bags to use over and over again. Brown paper bags can be recycled with cardboard.
- **Cardboard:** This usually means corrugated cardboard, which typically are the brown boxes we use daily. Cereal, noodle, cracker, detergent and tissue boxes CANNOT be recycled with cardboard. No milk cartons either. Flatten cardboard boxes.
- **Oil:** It's the law in South Carolina to recycle or dispose of oil properly. Place oil into a container with a secure lid to prevent spills and take it to one of the more than 700 sites located around the state. Many of these sites also accept oil filters and bottles. For the location nearest you, call DHEC's Recycling Hot Line at **1-800-768-7348**.



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**1-800-768-7348**  
[www.scdhec.net/recycle](http://www.scdhec.net/recycle)

DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling FYIs provide general information on environmental topics. Readers are encouraged to reproduce this material. For more information about solid waste issues, please call **1-800-768-7348** or visit our Web site at [www.scdhec.net/recycle](http://www.scdhec.net/recycle). Please send written correspondence to: DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201.